

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 8, 2016

Agenda Item: Pine Grove Pond Land Donation (R1)

Division: Fisheries

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 Min

Background

The Department first brought this site to the Commission in May of 2009 when the landowner, Robin Street, offered to donate to the Department a 12.789-acre parcel of land for a family fishing pond. Since that time, the site has been fully developed and is one of the most heavily used Fishing Access Sites (FAS) in the Region, receiving in excess of 30,000 angler days per year. Two years ago Mr. Street donated another small parcel of his land in order to allow FWP to expand the existing parking area. Mr. Street is now in the process of selling the 140 acres of land adjacent to the FAS and anticipates the property will be subdivided for home sites. To prevent potential encroachment on the FAS from the subdivision development, Mr. Street is proposing to donate approximately 5.17 additional acres of property to establish a buffer between any future subdivision development and the FAS.

Public Involvement Process & Results

FWP prepared and released an environmental assessment (EA) for public review and comment. FWP accepted public comment on the draft EA for a 15-day period, from Oct. 20, 2016, through Nov. 4, 2016. The EA was advertised through media releases and legal notices in the Daily Inter Lake, Whitefish Pilot, and Helena Independent Record. Copies of the EA were available from the Kalispell FWP office and the FWP State Headquarters in Helena. Public notice was on the FWP web site, and the draft EA was available for viewing at the Montana State Library and the Flathead County Libraries. Notification of the draft EA was distributed to neighboring landowners and interested parties. Seven comments were received, all of which were in favor of the proposal to accept donation of the property.

Alternatives and Analysis

The Department considered two alternatives. The no-action alternative would mean the Department will not accept the donation of land and no buffer would be provided between the FAS and any land development that will occur on the 140 acres adjacent to the FAS. The preferred alternative will be to accept the donation of land, providing a physical and visual buffer between the FAS and any land development that would occur once the 140 acres are sold.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the Commission approve that the Department accept the donation of land by Mr. Street.

Proposed Motion

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission authorize the Department to accept the donation of land from Mr. Street to expand the Pine Grove Pond Fishing Access Site.